

## ACTIVITIES OF THE WEEK

### **Monday, May 13:**

6:30pm Festival Meeting  
7:00pm GOYA Ice Cream Social at Andy's

### **Tuesday, May 14**

5:30pm Philoptochos Meeting  
6:30pm Parish Council Meeting

### **Wednesday, May 15:**

4:30pm KIKLOS AGAPIS Bible Study in Greek

### **Thursday, May 16:**

7:00pm Bible Study in English  
7:00pm Men's League Basketball

### **Saturday, May 18:**

6:30pm Bouzouki Night

### **Sunday, May 19:**

**Sunday of the Myrrh-Bearing Women**  
8:15am Orthros and 9:30am Divine Liturgy

## STEWARDSHIP 2024

We appreciate our Stewards - our Saints  
Constantine and Helen Church Family.

Your Stewardship gift reflects your appreciation  
for God's many blessings.

### **Stewardship 2024 Update:**

As of May 10th, Stewardship gifts have been  
received from 420 individual / families totaling  
\$250,029.55. Our GOAL is \$425,000.00

Some of the donations represent fulfillment of  
their total pledge, while many others have begun  
their weekly, monthly or other scheduled  
donations. We are so thankful for all our Saints  
Constantine and Helen Stewards. If you have not  
submitted your stewardship, please do so to help  
us reach our goal. †††

## SCHOLARSHIPS

The St. Helen Women's Philoptochos will  
be awarding two High School  
Scholarships in the amount of \$1,500.00 to  
Seniors in our parish. We welcome all  
High School Senior to apply by May 19th.  
Winners will be announced on June 9th at  
Graduation Sunday. Good Luck to all! Feel  
free to apply at:

<https://www.stconstantinehelen.org/s/St-Helen-Womens-Philoptochos-Scholarship-Requirements-and-Application-Process-2024docx-2.pdf>

## MEMORIALS

† Memorials are not celebrated from Palm  
Sunday through  
the Sunday of St. Thomas (May 12th) †  
Inclusive

## ✝ FUNERALS ✝

The following funerals were held recently:

**Peter Bokos**

Wednesday, May 8, 2024

**George Vlahakis**

Thursday, May 9, 2024

† May their memory be eternal †

## Message from

### **Chancellor Bishop Timothy Bakakos:**

This year's Commemoration of the Fall of  
Constantinople will take place on Thursday,  
May 16th, at 7:00pm, at St. John the Baptist  
Church, Des Plaines, IL. The focus this year will  
be to educate the faithful about our mother church  
in Constantinople. Archon Dr. John Fotopoulos  
will be the guest speaker. A short film will also be  
shown that highlights the Patriarchate and  
Constantinople, ending with a trisagion and  
Byzantine chanting by the  
Ascension of our Lord girl's group.  
Light refreshments will be served by their Ladies  
Philoptochos following the event.

## CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR 2024 GRADUATES!!

Join us on June 2nd for Divine Liturgy  
and Graduate Recognition. All grades  
(grade school through graduate school will  
be recognized). Email  
[sschmedia@gmail.com](mailto:sschmedia@gmail.com) with graduate's  
name, graduating from and future plans  
by May 29th.



Saints Constantine and Helen Greek Orthodox  
Church

## THE WEEKLY CHURCH BULLETIN

Father Chris Avramopoulos, Pastor  
Father Nicholas Dahdal, Associate Priest

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**SUNDAY, May 12, 2024**

Κυριακή 12η Μαΐου 2024

ΚΥΡΙΑΚΗ ΤΟΥ ΘΩΜΑ

Αποστ: Πραξ. 5:12-20

Ευαγγ: Ιωαννου 20:19-31

Sunday of Thomas

Today's Readings

Epistle: Acts 5:12-20

Gospel: John 20:19-31

*Χριστός Ανέστη! Christ is Risen!*

## IT'S THE SCARS

Today's Gospel lesson presents to us the scars of Christ. When the disciples told Thomas that they had seen the Lord, Thomas responded to them by saying: "Unless I see in His hands the print of the nails, and place my finger in the mark of the nails, and place my hand in his side, I will not believe." Eight days later when the disciples were in the room and Thomas was with them, the doors being shut, our Lord stood in the midst of them and said, "Peace be to you." Then He said to Thomas, "Put your finger here, and see my hands; and put out your hand, and place it into my side; do not be faithless, but believing." Thomas answered Him, "My Lord and my God!" Thomas believed when he saw the scars of Jesus. For him, the scars were the greatest proof that this was the real Jesus, the Jesus who had suffered and died, the Jesus Who had risen from the tomb. Through the Gospel lesson, the Risen Christ appears also to us. He shows us the scars in His hands and side. What do the scars of Christ teach us? What do they tell us about Him?

First, the scars of Jesus teach us that life is a struggle. Whoever got the idea that a good Christian never suffers? St. Augustine said "God had one son without sin, but He has no sons without suffering." God never promised us immunity from suffering — His own Son suffered — but He has promised us victory in our suffering. "In the world you have tribulation but be of good cheer. I have overcome the world," He said. The worst thing that evil can do is to kill God. Having been defeated in that, in its strongest moment, when evil wore its greatest armor, it can never be victorious again.

Secondly, the scars of Jesus speak eloquently of His love, but they also speak to our scars. The hardest part of suffering for Christians is the dark hour when they are tempted to believe that God is not with them in their suffering; when they suppose that Jesus reigns in some far-off splendor, untroubled by their woe. This is simply not true! The first thing Jesus does when He comes to sufferers is to show them His scarred hands. Here is the key! When we are pouring out our passionate pleading to Jesus and asking Him why this should happen to us, look! He is showing us His hands.

*Continued on Page 2*



Finally the scars on the body of Jesus were caused by our sin. If we were to choose a symbol for sin, perhaps the best one would be a nail. Each sin is a nail that continues to be driven into the body of Jesus. The best definition of sin is that it is not only the breaking of God's commandments, but even more so, the breaking of God's heart.

Jesus appeared to the disciples, and to Thomas, showing them the scars in His hands and side — scars that were proof of His love; scars that won for us the final Victory over death; scars that speak a compassionate word of understanding to our wounds; scars which if we have re-opened through our sin, we can hopefully restore through our sincere and honest repentance.

History has not been kind to Thomas. But, we have to realize that he has verbalized much of what is in our own minds. Surrounded by scars we, too, say: "Until I see in His own hands the mark of the nails, and put my finger into the nail marks and my hand into His side, I will never believe." Having seen the scars, we cannot but say with Thomas, "My Lord and my God!"

### The portrait of true LOVE: Our Mothers

*Love is patient and kind. Love is not jealous or boastful; it is not arrogant and rude.*

*Love does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful.*

*It does not rejoice at wrong, but rejoices in the right.*

*Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never fails.*

*-St. Paul's First Letter to the Corinthians 13: 4-7*

Our Lord, at this time of year, gives us a showering of love like no other.

Inside these celebratory days, we also remember God's greatest example of love: Our Mothers. They represent the masterpiece of creation, for what greater example of Christ's love for all can be known than the example of the love of our Mother? Most appropriate it is that Christ's own mother, the Virgin Mary, illustrates the love of a mother so graphically in a standard

that we must hope to achieve in understanding, living and sharing God's love to all. For a mother's love does not boast of its unselfish ways. A mother's love does not force or command attention and response, but quietly awaits our responding love. And if that response takes longer than it should or doesn't come forth at all, a Mother's love does not end but continually gives in patient hope and prayer. Yes, we learn how to love, and what love is, through the experience of our Mother's love. The words of St. Paul in his Epistle to the Corinthians come to life within the soft, tender and caring ways of a Mother. Our Risen Lord is our example of love, but the teachers of love are our Mothers.

Volumes have been written in words and much more resides in our hearts of the love of our mothers, but it is far surpassed by their everyday actions. Truly God has given our Mothers the example, they have made it reality. Vigilant is the love of God, as our Mothers keep vigil. Embracing is the love of God, as our Mothers hug. Stern is the love of God, as our Mothers discipline. Without cost is given the love of God, as our Mothers give freely. Reassuring is the love of God, as our Mothers continually comfort us. Wisdom is the love of God, as our Mothers are wise. Accepting is the love of God, as our Mothers are always accepting. Sacrificing is the love of God, as our Mothers sacrifice all. Eternal is the love of God, as our Mothers love without end. Lifegiving is the love of God, as our Mothers give us life.

Why do our Mothers sacrifice their food, so that their children may eat? Why do our Mothers find joy in doing without, so that their children may have? Why do our Mothers feel the pain of their children with even greater pain? Why do our Mothers rejoice even greater in their children's accomplishments than they do their own? These are all great questions and mysteries in our mind, which our Lord presents to us in His greatest Creation, the Portrait of True Love: Our Mothers.

**HAPPY MOTHER'S DAY!!**  
*Today's beautiful flowers have been graciously donated by*  
**Mr. & Mrs. Dimitrios Stavrou and family**  
*Thank you!*



### Κυριακή, 19η Μαΐου **ΚΥΡΙΑΚΗ ΤΩΝ ΜΥΡΟΦΟΡΩΝ**

Ώρθρος - 8:15 π.μ.  
Θεία Λειτουργία - 9:30 π.μ.



### **ΤΑ ΟΝΟΜΑΣΤΗΡΙΑ ΤΗΣ** **ΕΚΚΛΗΣΙΑΣ ΜΑΣ** Δευτέρα, 20η Μαΐου

Ώρα 7:00 μ.μ.  
Μέγας Αρχιερατικός Πανηγυρικός  
Εσπερινός  
συμπαραστατούμενου του  
Ίεροῦ Κλήρου Σικάγου και  
περιχώρων

Ἡ Φιλόπτωχος Ἀδελφότης  
ΑΓΙΑ ΕΛΕΝΗ θά ἔχει  
δεξιῶσιν εἰς τήν αἴθουσα



### Τριτη, 21η Μαΐου **Μνήμη των Κτητορων Αγίων** **μας Κωνσταντίνου καί Ελένης**

Ώρα 8:30 π.μ.  
Ώρθρος και Αρχιερατική  
Θεία Λειτουργία  
Θά τελεσθῆ καί ἀρτοκλασία.

Ἡ Φιλόπτωχος Ἀδελφότης  
ΑΓΙΑ ΕΛΕΝΗ θά ἔχει  
δεξιῶσιν εἰς τήν αἴθουσα



**ΣΗΜΕΡΑ**

### **ΚΥΡΙΑΚΗ ΤΟΥ ΘΩΜΑ**

Ο Απόστολος Θωμάς απουσίαζε όταν ο Χριστός, μετά την Ανάστασή Του, επισκέφθηκε τους Μαθητές Του στο υπερών όπου ήταν συνηγμένοι. Όταν πληροφορήθηκε τα σχετικά με την επίσκεψη του Χριστού, ζήτησε να Τον δη και να ψηλαφήσει τις πληγές του Σταυρού στα χέρια και την πλευρά Του. Ο Χριστός όταν επισκέφθηκε και πάλι τους Μαθητές Του μετά από οκτώ ημέρες, κάλεσε τον Απόστολο Θωμά να ψηλαφήσει τα σημάδια των πληγών στο Σώμα Του. Τότε ο Απόστολος Θωμάς Τον ανεγνώρισε και Τον ομολόγησε Κύριο και Θεό του. Τον ανεγνώρισε από τις πληγές του Σταυρού, οι οποίες αποτελούν σημάδι της αγάπης Του, αλλά και της δυνάμεώς Του. Την ομολογία του Θωμά οι άγιοι Πατέρες την ονομάζουν σωτήριο. Και πραγματικά οδηγεί στην σωτηρία όλους εκείνους που την απευθύνουν στον Χριστό εκζητώντας ταπεινά το έλεός Του.

Το γεγονός ότι ο Απόστολος Θωμάς αρχικά απουσίαζε κατά την εμφάνιση του Χριστού στους Μαθητές Του, φαίνεται ότι ήταν οικονομία Θεού, για να γίνει πιστευτό το θαύμα της Αναστάσεως και να διαλυθεί κάθε είδους αμφιβολία.

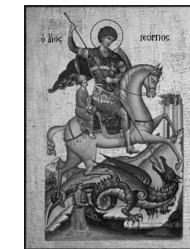
Ο Απόστολος Θωμάς, μετά την Πεντηκοστή, κήρυξε το Ευαγγέλιο στους Πάρθους, τους Πέρσες, τους Μήδους και τους Ινδούς και είχε μαρτυρικό τέλος.

Πηγη: www.dogma.gr



### **ΑΓΙΟΥ ΓΕΩΡΓΙΟΥ**

Ο Άγιος Γεώργιος γεννήθηκε μεταξύ των ετών 280-285 μ.Χ., πιθανώς στην περιοχή της Αρμενίας, από τον Έλληνα Συγκλητικό, στρατηλάτη στο αξίωμα, κατά τους χρόνους του αυτοκράτορα Διοκλητιανού, Γερόντιο. Εκεί, σε ένα μοναστήρι της περιοχής, ο Άγιος δέχθηκε το Μυστήριο του Βαπτίσματος και έγινε μέλος της Εκκλησίας.



Ο πατέρας του Αγίου, Γερόντιο, καταγόταν από πλούσια και επίσημη γενιά της Καππαδοκίας. Η σύζυγός του ονομαζόταν Πολυχρονία, ήταν χριστιανή και καταγόταν από το γνωστό Λύδδα (Διάσπολη) της Παλαιστίνης.

Σε νεαρή ηλικία ο Γεώργιος κατατάχθηκε στο ρωμαϊκό στρατό. Διακρίθηκε για την τόλμη και τον ηρωισμό του και έλαβε το αξίωμα του Τριβούνου. Το 303 μ.Χ., όταν άρχισαν οι διωγμοί του Διοκλητιανού, ο Άγιος Γεώργιος δε δίστασε να ομολογήσει τη χριστιανική του πίστη, προκαλώντας το μένος του Διοκλητιανού, ο οποίος τον υπέβαλε σε σειρά βασανιστηρίων. Ο Διοκλητιανός δεν το περίμενε και έφριξε με τη στάση του Γεωργίου. Τότε άρχισε για τον Άγιο μια σειρά φρικτών βασανιστηρίων, αλλά και θαυμάτων, που έφεραν πολλούς ειδωλολάτρες στη χριστιανική πίστη. Ο Άγιος μαρτύρησε προσευχόμενος, απετιμήθη την κεφαλήν, την Παρασκευή 23 Απριλίου του έτους 303 μ.Χ.